

ST. OLAVE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK.

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The plan of the body of this church is a parallelogram, divided into nave and aisles; the columns, which separate from each other these three compartments, are fluted, of the Ionic order, in each range four in number, and, with their square waisted pedestals, are all of Portland stone, and have diagonally-voleted capitals, bearing in each curved recess of their abaci a beautiful rose, carved after nature, instead of conventionally; against the eastern and western walls of the body of the church are also four pilasters, fluted, diagonally-voleted, and otherwise corresponding with the columns themselves. The column capitals, which were much damaged by the late fire, have been renewed; the western pilasters as yet remain in a very mutilated state, and their capitals are entirely destroyed. Behind each of the Ionic columns is a small pilaster, attached to its shaft, and reaching only up to the underside of the gallery.

The nave is prolonged eastward by a very beautiful apse, containing the altar-compartment, which is a semi-circular tribune.

At the west end of the nave lies the tower of the church, north and south of which adjoin the great staircases according to the church-galleys.

Behind, or on the north side of the church, lies the parish cemetery, and there was, till lately, another cemetery, granted to the parish in the reign of Henry VIII., which has, however, been taken, under several acts of Parliament, for the site of the railroad-station.

On the north side of the altar is a small robing-room.

On the Ionic columns ranges an enriched entablature, consisting of architrave, frieze, and cornice; the architrave in three faces, its lower face surmounted by a small pater-noster, its middle one by a small enriched ogee, and the whole architrave crowned by a much larger enriched ogee, filleted above. The soffit of the architrave is in each inter-column ornamented with a central circular ornament, flowered with a patera, the remainder of the soffit filled up on each side by a leafy pilloved panel, conforming likewise to the circular coffer. The frieze is plain, unbroken, and without the winged cherub over each column which in the original design; the cornice consists of a plain cavetto, surmounted by an enriched ogee and dentils, its corona bearing an enriched ogee, filleted above, supporting a plain cyma-recta.

The entablature continues all round the interior of the fabric, including the altar apse; but, except the west front, the body of the church, where only a string-course, enriched with a Vitruvian scroll, ranges with the Ionic cornice.

The nave of the church is continued upwardly from the stone Ionic columns by carpentry, its outside perpendicular part being covered with lead, and the clerestory roof itself, as well as the roofs over the galleries and staircases, are slated.

Over the whole nave of the church extends a most beautiful groined ceiling of five divisions, very highly finished.

More than half the light within the church is admitted through ten clerestory windows, one in the perpendicular side of each compartment of the groining.

The five groined compartments of the ceiling over the nave are separated from each other by architraves, filleted, and enriched consoles (which are not in the original design), with an acanthus-leaf in front, and surmounted by an enriched impost, which is continued along the sides and west end of the clerestory. These archivolts have their soffits enriched by double scroll-work foliage and husks, the summit of each archivolt being distinguished by a patera; the groin-points are enriched by a bead divided by long rolls and three husks alternating, and the ends of the archivolts, where the beaded groin-points cross each other, is marked by a very large flower.

Each of the four compartments of each groin is divided into two panels by a curious raised balustrade roll-moulding, enriched by a voluted riband, alternating with peculiar oblique-shaped lozenge-flowers.

In the restoration of the church, some distance within each of these balustrades has been formed a sunk panel, bearing close to its margin a Grecian enriched head.

Though we have a rooted dislike to improvements, by other hands, upon architects' original designs, we are obliged to confess this paneling has a good effect.

Before the fire, the west end of the clerestory was ornamented in stucco, with a relief of the angelic choir, below which was a decorative relief, containing musical instruments and other work; this should have been restored.

Over each gallery answering to the five inter-columns, the ceiling is divided into five compartments by bands or beams which spring from and agree with the cornices; the corona-soffit, on the four sides surrounding each gallery-ceiling is beautifully and very boldly and effectively enriched with the simplest form of the fret-ornament, but the soffit of the four beams on each side, separating the ceiling into compartments, is enriched with this fret-ornament twice repeated side by side.

The great Ionic entablature is continued all round the four sides of each gallery-ceiling, but round the other sides of the five compartments themselves, only the corona and crown-mouldings are continued.

Within each of the ten compartments of the ceilings over the galleries, a sunk panel, surrounded by an enriched Grecian bead, has been added in the restoration, as in the compartments of the groined ceiling over the nave of the church.

The plastering, which was very choice, and a late instance of the fine ornamental stucco-work done by hand, was performed by Mr. Batson, who signed a contract (which we examined in the parish document) for the sum of £295. Other tenders for the work had been received, viz. from—

Mr. Fairbrother, for	£200	0	0
— Yeade	340	2	0
— Warrall	348	0	0
— Wilton	354	0	0
— Weston	359	0	0
— Farley	374	0	0

but after some inquiry and consideration, the lowest tender was declined.

The galleries have very sculptured fronts, appearing to be supported upon plain architraves, beaded below, and divided by an ogee into two faces, crowned by a plain cornice, which is supported by an ovolo between two fillets, crowned by a dripped and seaped corona, surmounted by a cyma-recta; in Filicoff's original design, these gallery-fronts are shown with each inter-columnar length divided into six panels, with five cherubim between them; but in the execution of the work, this arrangement was impaired in simplicity and boldness by dividing each compartment into only four panels, separated by a peculiar kind of terminal attic pilasters, three in number, with trinitarian allusion to the Three that bear record in heaven, each carved with the figure of a cherub, with wings folded in front, something like those over the stalls in St. Paul's Cathedral, though inferior in design and delicacy of workmanship. At the feet of these pilasters ranges all round the gallery-fronts a peculiar torso-moulding, wrought in the fashion of primrose-flowers within small circular compartments; and under each cherub is carved talpice of foliage, in the form of a rich husk.

The gallery-fronts are finished upwardly by an impost mitred over the cherubim, coronated and surmounted by a small egg-and-tongue moulding, filleted, and in the bed-moulding of which is an enriched ogee, also filleted above.

Where upper-divisions in the galleries rise above the gallery-fronts, that which would otherwise have been a deformity is rendered an elegance, by these few-divisions being terminated towards the nave by beautiful scroll brackets carved with primroses and other ornaments. The pews in the galleries were principally of deal, but all finished with broad wainscot cappings.

The western gallery, which is long restored, had a centre part somewhat advanced, supported by two waistnut fluted Doric columns. Instead of being paneled, this centre compartment of the gallery-front was decorated by turned balusters, in the centre of which was placed a dial surrounded by some carved-work. Over each Doric column was an attic pilaster, paneled and carved with a shell and pendent husks.

The wings of the western gallery-front were only divided each into three panels, by two ter-

minial attic pilasters bearing angels, as the others. The pulpit was a very elegant piece of design, very beautifully executed in very beautiful materials, and was, like most of the pulpits in the city of London, replete with symbolical carving and marquetted work.

The altar-apse is separated from the nave by two fluted Ionic pilasters on each side, from which sprung two archivolts, enriched like the others; and at the back of the apse are two other fluted Ionic pilasters, surmounted by another enriched archivolt of less compass, which cuts geometrically into the domed ceiling; between these pilasters are the Decalogue and altar-window.

The ceiling of the altar-apse, which was apparently not much damaged, however, has required to be restored; it was a semi-dome, forming a rich piece of gilt-colored work, three ranges of octagonal panels, eleven each, with small diagonal lozenge-panels between them, and half-lozenge-panels next the enclosing borders of the work, each coffer containing a roset, formed the decorations of the Domed work.

The altar is very beautifully finished, and we hope hereafter to give some of its details, as well as the gallery-cherubim and other decorations.

The two tables of the Decalogue are set within one beautifully-designed and richly-carved frame, surmounted by a gilt stellar crown, with gilt palm-branch mouldings, and carved and gilt scroll foliage in the spandrils between the arched heads of the tables and their enclosing frame. At the sides of the decalogue are the Dominical Prayer and the Creed in oval frames, enriched with eggs-and-tongues, and mantled nearly all round by palm-branches ascending from below.

Above these are statues of Moses and Aaron, in circular niches, within square architraves scrolled at top, between the turns of which, over each niche, is a cherub and a pendent garland.

Around the altar-tribune, at the level of the gallery-imposts, is carried a string or impost, with its ovolo enriched with shells instead of eggs, and beneath this, immediately under each niche, are two enriched and gilt consoles, between which are pendent garlands consisting of the sacramental emblems of corn, vine-leaves, and grapes.

The whole of the exterior of the tower and of the southern and western fronts of the church are of fine Portland stone.

The back or north side of the church next the cemetery nearly resembles the southern front, but between the window-architraves, cornice, parapet-coping, and projecting quoins, the wall is faced with stone of the best kind, which being restored and pointed with very dark blue mortar, instead of white mortar, has a very good effect, though little seen by the public.

The tower was substantially constructed with vaultings above the ringing-loft and over the bell-chamber, so as to be capable of bearing the spire, as originally designed by the architect, and we hope to see money raised for the completion of the fabric, the more especially as the raising of the new structure of London-bridge and the burning in of lofty warehouses, this beautiful church has been, as it were, trampled down into a hole, and, moreover, as much difficulty does not seem to have been created in the raising of money for an enlarged organ and for a stained altar-window—little, indeed, to be commended.

It would seem that, besides the one design for the steeple, something cheaper must have been projected by Filicoff, for in a Minute, June 4th, 1740, relating to paying the architect his account, appears the following:—

"For Designing and Estimating the new church, with proposals for the several architects, and assisting the Trustees to make their Contracts; making all the necessary drawings and Conducting the Works, with measuring the extra works, and Examining their accounts; for making models of the Roof and Ceiling, and the Alter End of the Church, pateras of moulding for the plastering, Designs for the Steeple, Consisting of Elevations, Plans and Sections, with the Estimate of the Charges of each, one of about £1050, the other £650, as the architects were then up."

We think every church requires, as a beacon, to be made the loftiest, as well as the best, house in the parish.

In the account for building the church will be found considerable expense gone to